

REMARKS

Claim 11 is added by this Amendment. Therefore, claims 5, 6, 8, 9 and 11 are pending in this application. No new matter is added. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 5 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0030898 A1 to Kouchiyama et al. (Kouchiyama). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 5 recites *inter alia*, etching a surface of a lens to reduce an optical thickness.

The Office Action alleges that a lens 1 of Kouchiyama corresponds to the lens manufactured by the method according to claim 5.

Kouchiyama teaches that a layer of a mask material 12 is formed on a substrate 11 (see Fig. 2). The layer of the mask material 12 is patterned by light exposure and development to form masks 13 in registration with respective lenses (see Fig. 3). The masks 13 are heat-treated to reduce the surface area of the masks 13 and to deform the masks 13 to an optically smooth curved surface (See Fig. 4) as described in paragraphs [0063] - [0065]. The shape corresponding to the shape of the masks 13 is formed in the optical material using a dry etching method to give hemispherical lenses 14 as described in paragraph [0074].

Applicant respectfully submits that Kouchiyama only teaches that the masks having shapes similar to lenses are etched to form the lenses on the substrate 11. Kouchiyama does not teach or suggest etching lenses formed on the substrate 11. In addition, Kouchiyama does not teach or suggest etching a surface of the lens to reduce the optical thickness as recited in claim 5 because Kouchiyama only teaches to shape the masks by etching to create a spherical surface.

Claim 5 specifically recites manufacturing the lens before etching the surface of the lens to reduce the optical thickness.

Applicant respectfully submits that the lenses 14 are manufactured after etching as described in paragraph [0074] of Kouchiyama.

At least for the reasons described above, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 5 is patentably distinct from Kouchiyama.

Claim 8 is patentable at least for its dependence on claim 5, as well as for the additional features it recites.

Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection of claims 5 and 8 is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 6 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kouchiyama. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 6 and 9 are patentable at least for their dependence on allowable claim 5, as well as for the additional features they recite.

In particular, claim 6 recites that etching is performed to bring an optical thickness of the manufactured lens to a target optical thickness of the lens. The Office Action alleges that dry etching of the surface of the masks corresponds to this feature. However, as discussed above Kouchiyama merely forms the surface of the optical material in a spherical shape by dry etching. Kouchiyama does not teach or suggest that a target optical thickness of the lens is to be achieved.

As such, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 6 and 9 is respectfully requested.

New claim 11 recites that at least one of polishing, pressing and cutting is operated in manufacturing the lens. This feature is described in the specification, for example, page 13, lines 18-23. Claim 11 is patentable at least for its dependence on claim 5, as well as for the additional features it recites.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 5, 6, 8, 9 and 11 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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